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For SWS

8 December 1978

S-0656/DIA/DN-1A

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER FOR WARNING (NIO/W)

SUBJECT: Overview of the Strategic Warning Staff (SWS)

1. As requested by your memorandum of 3 November 1978, an ad hoc committee has reviewed the Strategic Warning Staff to determine its most productive role for the future. No attempt was made to conduct a postmortem on past successes or failures. On the contrary, our sole purpose was to investigate potential future roles in light of the new National Warning System.
2. Recommended alternatives are presented in the form of options in descending order of preference and are to be found in Section IV of the accompanying paper. The members were unanimous in the priority in which the alternatives appear; however, minor rewording of the final text was left to the chairman. The report has not been coordinated with the principals of the parent agencies.

1 Enclosure
SWS Overview Report
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Chairman
SWS Overview Committee

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S-0656/DIA/DN-1A

SWS OVERVIEW REPORT

7 December 1978

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7 December 1978

SWS OVERVIEW REPORT

I. Introduction: The recent establishment of a National Intelligence Warning System created a National Intelligence Officer for Warning (NIO/W) and charged the regional NIOs with the substantive responsibility for warning in their respective fields. As a result, it seems prudent to investigate the future role of the Strategic Warning Staff (SWS) with a view to recommending possible modifications. This paper explores various possibilities. It is the product of an SWS Overview Group appointed by the Warning Working Group (WWG). Recommended alternatives are to be found in Section IV.

II. Assumptions: To establish parameters with which to bound this study, certain assumptions were necessary. They were:

That to continue its existence, the SWS must make a meaningful contribution to warning at the national level; however, it could be substantive, procedural, or both.

That the NIO/W would retain responsibility for both substantive and procedural warning matters at the national level.

That the remaining NIOs would retain responsibility for broad areas of warning analysis and evaluation.

That the role of the remainder of the Warning Intelligence Community (DIA, NSA, CIA, State INR, the Unified and Specified Commands, and the Military Services) would remain essentially unchanged.

III. Alternative Roles for the SWS: The major alternatives for the SWS are three:

- A procedural support role in the areas of warning management, policy, processes and coordination.
- A substantive warning role.
- A combination of the two.

In the paragraphs following, these alternatives will be developed in some detail with advantages and disadvantages as applicable. It should be noted that the pros and cons listed are illustrative and in no way categorical.

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A. Procedural Support Role: Given a role to provide staff support in the areas of warning management, policy, processes, and coordination, the SWS might function under the NIO/W, the Warning Working Group, the NIOs, or a combination thereof. Personnel would not be practicing substantive analysts, but rather officers expert in the field of Indications and Warning (I&W). Major advantages and disadvantages which might accrue from an arrangement such as this are listed below.

Pro:

Would provide knowledge of the I&W System worldwide including capabilities, limitations, procedures, products, command/agency relationships, etc.

Would provide, at the national level, a central point of contact for all warning related procedural or policy matters within the Intelligence Community.

Would provide continuity, an "institutional memory."

Could provide staff support to the Warning Working Group, whose members now rely on their parent agency staffs, or the NIO/W, or both, in which case the same group of people could staff both policy decisions and implementation.

Con:

Another layer of staff/management would be added to an already overcrowded arena.

Procedural and policy staffing might be accomplished just as effectively if the primary agency were tasked through the Warning Working Group on an ad hoc basis.

The Warning Working Group principals will probably continue to rely on their own staffs in any case; thus the SWS in this role might be duplicative.

The liaison function of the SWS personnel with their parent agencies might be less than optimal, particularly if the parent agencies viewed them as just another part of management overhead.

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B. Substantive Role: If the SWS role is to be substantive, it must be viewed in context with the existing warning apparatus. It would appear the SWS could fulfill a number of substantive roles at the national level.

1. The SWS could provide interdisciplinary analysis for warning, maintaining a cadre of experts with in-depth knowledge of past warning situations.

Pro:

Would satisfy the need for an "institutional memory."

Would ensure continuance of a group of experts dedicated to warning only, not distracted by other intelligence interests.

Would provide an instantly available consultative staff-in-being when a crisis started to build rapidly.

Con:

Could result in a static, historically oriented staff rather than a dynamic, forward-looking one.

Would probably not produce written intelligence in its normal day-to-day posture, thus might be viewed as an expensive luxury.

2. The SWS could serve as a catalyst to the rest of the Warning Community, charged with exploring alternate hypotheses and challenging the prevailing assumptions. As an adjunct to that role, it could be tasked to identify burgeoning crisis areas to serve an alerting role for the NIOs and NIO/W.

Pro:

Would provide an institutional vehicle for challenge, thus filling a gap which exists now.

Would provide decisionmakers and analysts with alternative analyses for their consideration.

Would serve to bridge some of the functional and geographic boundaries extant in the NIO structure.

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Would provide a viewpoint devoted solely to warning, unencumbered with the distractions suffered by the rest of the Community.

Con:

Would be a very real danger that SWS alternative hypotheses which were intended for internal consumption would reach the wrong audience.

Might be a temptation to develop alternatives for their own sake; there is some danger in overworking the devil's advocate role.

3. The SWS could serve as a supportive group to the NIOs exclusively. Thus when a crisis appeared to be developing, the appropriate NIO could call on the SWS (perhaps augmented on an ad hoc basis) to supplement his working group.

Pro:

Would provide readily available warning expertise to the NIOs.

Would provide additional analytic manpower to the NIOs.

Con:

Could cast the SWS in a reactive rather than an anticipatory role.

Would be difficult to obtain a broad enough mix of geographic disciplines without ad hoc augmentation or significant expansion.

The best analytic talent should already be available in the NIOs' working groups, hence the SWS might be redundant.

4. The SWS could serve in a support role to the National Intelligence Tasking Center (NITC).

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Pro:

Would provide readily available analytic expertise to refine collection strategies in time of impending crisis.

Would provide warning expertise.

Con:

Would be difficult to obtain a broad enough mix of geographic disciplines.

Might be in direct competition with the remainder of the Warning Community.

C. Within the four basic roles listed previously, a number of suboptions are available.

1. The SWS mission might remain as it is; constrained to the USSR/WP, PRC, and North Korea, or it might be expanded to include other areas of potential crises as they are recognized.

Pro-constrain:

Would not stretch the capabilities of a small staff.

Con-constrain:

Would leave unfilled a gap at the national level. At present there is no formal mechanism, devoted solely to warning, to look at those crises which are short of a major confrontation with the communist powers.

Pro-expand:

Would fill that gap.

Would serve to tie together those warning questions which bridge NIO individual responsibilities.

Con-expand:

Would require a broader analytic base.

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Would run the danger of spreading the SWS effort too thin unless the areas of interest were diligently restricted to those where there is a genuine US interest.

2. The SWS warning function could encompass military intelligence, political/economic, or both.

Since there are no identifiable advantages to constraining their analysis to either military or political/economic, this question merits no further discussion. It seems clear that any national level warning staff must treat the total picture to be credible.

3. The SWS might be charged with long or short term warning, or time constraints need not be introduced.

The NIOs have been tasked to look about 60 days into the future, the estimates portion of the Community looks further downstream, and all agencies watch the very near term. The role chosen for the SWS to play will, to a great degree, dictate the time span towards which its attention should be directed.

D. Procedural Support and Substantive Role: The SWS could be tasked to provide both procedural and substantive support to the NIO/W, Warning Working Group, NITC, NIOs, or a combination thereof.

Pro:

Would combine both kinds of warning expertise in one place.

Would facilitate interchange between policy/procedural and substantive sides of the house.

Since the NIO/W has both procedural and substantive responsibilities, were the SWS to report to him in a mixed role, he would achieve a measure of management flexibility.

Con:

A mixed role could dilute the effort applied to either single function.

E. There is a final, very specialized role which the SWS might play; that of managing and operating a future operational version of the Warning Improvement Study and Plan (WISP). A precis of the WISP

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project is contained in enclosure 2. Although WISP is still in an embryonic state, it has received considerable favorable attention. Should development and testing over the next year or so prove the concept feasible, it might become attractive to establish a WISP-like system at the national level. Operation of that system would not be limited to daily introduction of intelligence information, but would include focused collection retasking (possibly through the NITC) and continuing analytical refinement as our perceptions of Soviet doctrine and deployment change. The SWS might eventually assume responsibility for an operational WISP and could serve in the interim as the project office for its development.

Pro:

Would enhance the stature of WISP by devoting national level assets to its development and operation.

Would provide a formal, institutionalized focus for WISP.

Could provide a structured analytic counterpart to the NITC.

Could serve as a cornerstone for applying similar techniques to areas other than the Soviet Union/Warsaw Pact.

Con:

Would devote the SWS to an unproven concept if done now.

Would, at least initially, be a narrowly restricted role.

IV. Recommendations: The recommended alternatives which follow are presented in the form of options in descending order of preference, and each is accompanied by supporting rationale derived from the pros and cons identified in Section III. Estimated staffing implications, recommended location, and cost considerations are included, where appropriate, as are recommendations for the SWS relationship to the remainder of the Warning Community. One thought pervades all the recommendations:

There is a need to retain, at the national level, a staff devoted exclusively to the warning problem and free of the distractions inherent in all other intelligence disciplines.

Thus, the primary recommendation is that the SWS be retained in some form.

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Option 1: The SWS shall be established to fill both a procedural support and substantive role for warning. It shall:

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Report directly to the NIO/W.

☒ _____

Provide support to the NIO/W, WWG, NIOs, and others as the NIO/W may direct.

Be responsible for staffing both procedural and substantive warning matters.

Be responsible for the USSR/WP, PRC, and North Korea, and those other areas where impending crises are of major importance to the security of the US, as approved by the NIO/W or other official to whom the SWS reports.

☒ _____

Include military, political, and economic factors within its purview.

Its functions will be to:

_____ ☒

Provide staff support to the NIO/W for matters of warning policy, processes, and coordination.

Provide staff support to the NIO/W for substantive warning matters.

Serve as a clearing house for information pertaining to Community operations addressing specific warning situations.

Through the DCI and NIO/W, maintain a continuous awareness of warning requirements and perceptions at the national level, and provide this information to the agencies in the Warning Community.

In conjunction with the NIO/W, and as directed by the NIO/W, coordinate development and maintenance of intelligence collection target analyses pertaining to latent and active warning situations.

Anticipate potential crisis areas of major importance to US security and report them to the NIO/W.

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_____ _____ As directed by the NIO/W, investigate and develop alternate hypotheses as a crisis develops, working closely with the applicable NIOs. *"critically examine"*

_____ _____ Provide warning expertise to the Community as required.

_____ *t* It shall be located in the Pentagon within the National Military Intelligence Center (NMIC).

_____ _____ It shall be manned with representatives from the various intelligence agencies and Military Services as at present, augmented by additional billets to support the expanded role. (See enclosure 3 for SWS present manning.)

Additional professional and administrative billets are anticipated to fulfill the procedural role; existing SWS manning should suffice for substantive analysis.

No cost implications are anticipated other than those associated with the additional billets.

Rationale: This role for the SWS fills two needs. Foremost is the requirement to provide substantive analysis at the national level devoted solely to warning. It is the one major area not specifically tasked to any other organization. In this role, the SWS could provide continuity, stimulate thought, and lend warning expertise regardless of geographic or functional boundaries. It would also provide the NIO/W a well-rounded staff to support his responsibilities for nonsubstantive matters.

Option 2: The SWS shall be established to provide substantive warning analysis. It shall:

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- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | Report directly to the NIO/W. |
| _____ | _____ | Provide support to the NIO/W, WWG, NIOs, and others as the NIO/W may direct. |
| _____ | _____ | Be responsible for staffing substantive warning matters. |
| _____ | _____ | Be responsible for the USSR/WP, PRC, North Korea and those other areas where impending crises are of major importance to the security of the US as approved by the NIO/W or other official to whom the SWS reports. |
| _____ | _____ | Include military, political, and economic factors within its purview. |

Its functions will be to:

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | Provide staff support to the NIO/W for substantive warning matters. |
| _____ | _____ | Serve as a clearing house for information pertaining to Community operations addressing specific warning situations. |
| _____ | _____ | Through the DCI and NIO/W, maintain a continuous awareness of warning requirements and perceptions at the national level, and provide this information to the agencies in the Warning Community. |
| _____ | _____ | In conjunction with the NITO, and as directed by the NIO/W, coordinate development and maintenance of intelligence collection target analyses pertaining to latent and active warning situations. |
| _____ | _____ | Anticipate potential crisis areas of major importance to US security and report them to the NIO/W. |
| _____ | _____ | As directed by the NIO/W, investigate and develop alternate hypotheses as a crisis develops, working closely with the applicable NIOs. |

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_____ _____ Provide warning expertise to the Community as required.

_____ _____ It shall be located in the Pentagon within the National Military Intelligence Center (NMIC).

_____ _____ It shall be manned with representatives from the various intelligence agencies and Military Services as at present. (See enclosure 3 for for SWS present manning.)

No cost implications are anticipated.

Rationale: While not providing the NIO/W staff support for other than substantive matters, this option would fill the same national gap discussed in Option 1. It would provide warning continuity, stimulate thought, and lend warning expertise to the Community regardless of geographic or functional boundaries.

Option 3: The SWS shall be established as a procedural staff for the NIO/W. It shall:

Approve Disapprove

_____ _____ Report directly to the NIO/W.

_____ _____ Maintain liaison with the rest of the Warning Community.

_____ _____ Be limited to staff actions relating to warning policy, processes, and procedures.

_____ _____ Have no responsibility for substantive warning intelligence.

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Its functions will be to;

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_____	_____	Staff warning policy matters.
_____	_____	Staff improvements in warning methodologies and procedures including communications and dissemination of intelligence.
_____	_____	Staff improvements in warning intelligence training for analysts.
_____	_____	Staff warning related budget matters.
_____	_____	It shall be collocated with the NIO/W.
_____	_____	It shall be manned by four professional staff officers and two administrative assistants.

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Costs would include a standing requirement to fund administrative and housekeeping support now provided by DIA. There would be no need to transfer either personnel or files from the existing SWS, as the new staff under this option would require different people and files.

Rationale: This option is attractive only in that it provides a procedural staff for the NIO/W. It does not fill the substantive warning gap perceived at the national level.

Option 4: The SWS shall be devoted to the support of the Warning Improvement Study and Plan (WISP). It shall:

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_____ _____ Report directly to the Warning Working Group (WWG).

_____ _____ Manage Project WISP under the guidance of the WWG.

Its functions will be to:

_____ _____ Continue development of the WISP concept.

_____ _____ Coordinate the implementation of WISP as a national I&W system.

_____ _____ Continue modification and refinement of WISP.

_____ _____ It shall be manned with representatives from the various intelligence agencies and Military Services as at present (see enclosure 3 for details).

No manpower or cost implications are anticipated.

Rationale: This alternative is not recommended at this time due to the embryonic nature of WISP.

Other suboptions are available and may be incorporated within some of the four major alternatives above. Since the recommended actions are contained above, suboptions are presented below without comment. Some advantages and disadvantages of each may be found in Section III.

Suboption A: Geographic constraints may be imposed to limit the SWS' areas of interest to:

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_____ _____ USSR/WP, PRC, and North Korea.

_____ _____ USSR/WP, PRC, North Korea and other areas where impending crises are of major importance to the security of the US as approved by the NIO/W or other official to whom the SWS reports.

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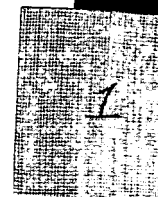
Suboption B: Chronological restraints may be imposed to limit the SWS' areas of interest to:

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_____	_____	Long-term (greater than six months into the future).
_____	_____	Mid-term (a few weeks to six months into the future).
_____	_____	Short-term (within the next week or so).

4 Enclosures

1. Excerpts from Draft DCID 1/5
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2. Project WISP (S) 1 Cy
3. SWS Manning/Intel Experience
of SWS Incumbent Personnel
(S) 1 Cy
4. SWS Overview Committee Members
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Project WISP

One of the most significant issues impacting on the Intelligence Community today, and particularly those parts of it concerned with the indications and warning (I&W) problem, is the growing volume of information inundating the indications and warning analyst. This paper describes an effort designed to assist in the solution of that problem. This rather ambitious effort focuses on Central Europe and attempts to assist the I&W analyst in discerning anomalies in Warsaw Pact force posture, to assist him in assessing the reasons for such anomalies and to aid in allocating collection resources to verify the extent and meaning of such anomalies. The effort is known as the Warning Improvement Study and Plan or Project WISP.

Project WISP grew out of a number of postcrisis criticisms of the present warning system. They include the charge that the system lacks focus, that collection has outstripped capabilities for analysis, that there is no structured way to audit collection effectiveness against the warning problem and that analysis lacks rigor. In varying degree all of these criticisms are true.

The 1976 Warning in Europe study commissioned by the then Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence featured a more structured concept for this task and proposed that a focused warning system could be developed. Such a system would be directed at a relatively small number of high value, specific and indicative targets and would utilize sampling techniques in its collection operations.

DIA was directed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (C3I) to investigate the feasibility of implementing such a system and a small, part-time project management office was set up in March 1977. The Director of Central Intelligence endorsed the project as a Community-wide effort in October 1977.

The participants in the project include the Washington Intelligence agencies, State, the Military Services, EUCOM and the British. The effort is guided by a Steering Group chaired by RADM Robertson of DIA, with all of the participating agencies represented. Three major tasks were identified. These were target selection, development of collection strategies, and the design and construction of analytical aids for the warning analyst. Some progress has been made toward the accomplishment of all three of these tasks.

Target selection had to be attended to first, and that has largely been completed. The magnitude of this target selection task is considerable. For example, there are thousands of basic encyclopedia numbered

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Soviet/Warsaw Pact installations whose activity could potentially provide warning information to the U.S. Obviously, frequent collection coverage of that large number of targets is impossible. Therefore, a series of categories or necessary key events (NKE's) was developed. These are defined as those events which would have to take place during a Warsaw Pact transition to an increased attack readiness posture preparatory to an attack against NATO's Central Region.

Next within each key event, indicators were developed which would suggest to an analyst that a key event was in-fact taking place. The final step in this process was then to select targets which would offer evidence that an indicator was active and therefore a key event was taking place. In this context a target means an installation, a personality or a unit. The actual target selection was done by intra-Community panels composed of experienced I&W analysts.

To make these selections of indicators and targets, a set of testing criteria was developed. Ambiguity was evaluated by asking the question -- "If I collect information regarding this target will it be meaningful?" Necessity was assessed by asking -- "Must this event take place in order for the Soviets to increase their readiness to attack?" Accessibility was determined by the question -- "Have I received in the past or may I expect in the future to receive information regarding this target?" Once a target was otherwise qualified timeliness was evaluated by simply answering the question -- "When would this event normally take place in the mobilization process?"

This target selection process was rather long and arduous, but the results are significant. From the thousands of potential targets a Community agreed upon compilation of approximately 2500 was derived, each keyed to a specific indicator and necessary key event and possessing a rough indication of relative priority.

During this same time frame work was also progressing in the development of aids to assist the warning analyst in assimilating the heavy volume of information he receives. The result of these efforts is a prototype analytical model, heirarchically structured and fed by all source information. It will aggregate the data vertically and produce a measurement, both overall and at intermediate levels, of the Warsaw Pact readiness to attack.

Figure 1 is an illustration of how the model is constructed. It incorporates several useful features. One is the capability to input data at all levels. This allows an all source input and takes into account the varying levels of specificity of the different collection disciplines. For example, experience thus far indicates most imagery derived data enters the model at the target level, while COMINT data enters at the indicator or NKE level. ELINT seems to fit at all levels depending on the situation.

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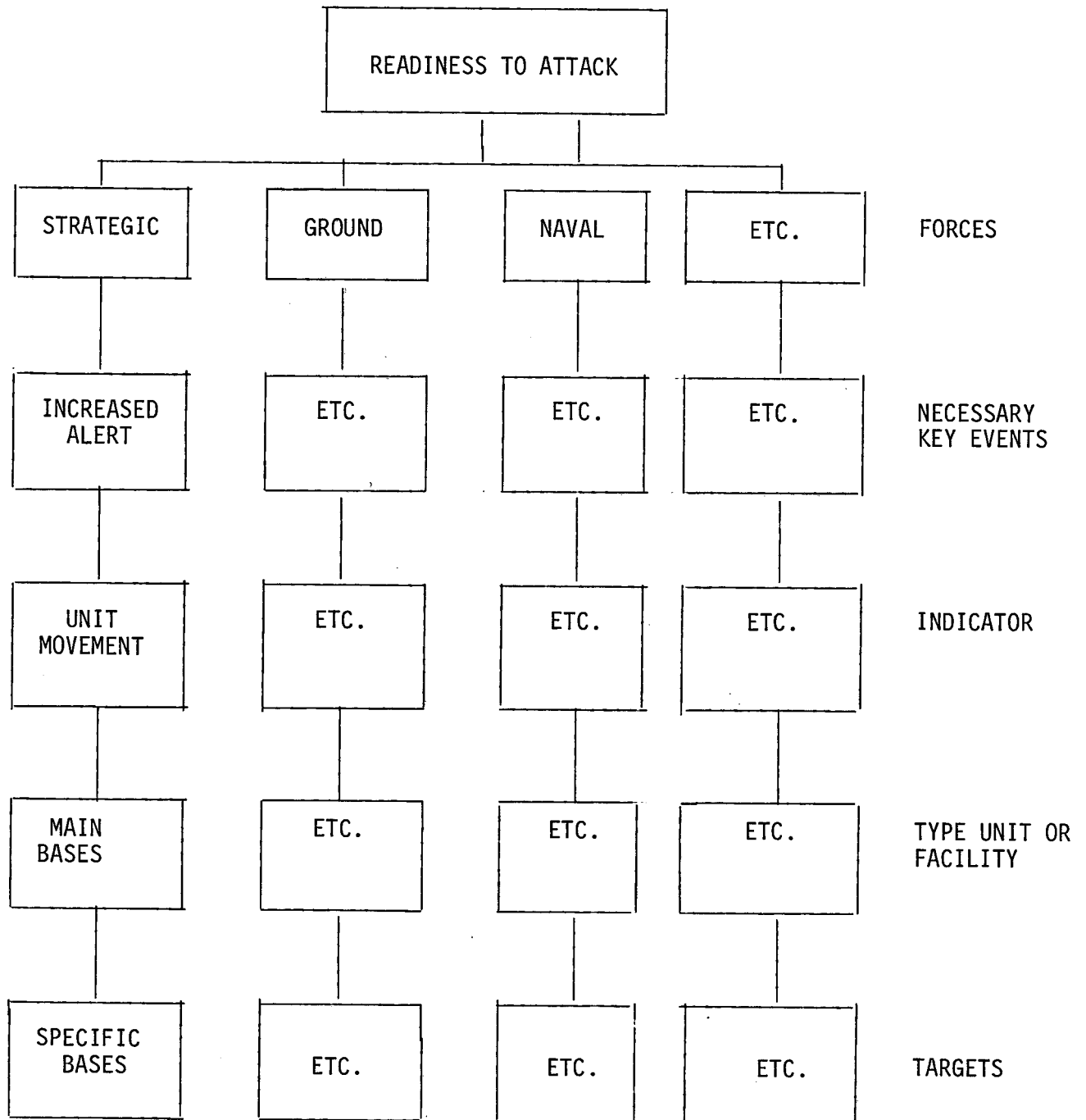


FIGURE 1

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Another feature is that the data inputs are made by the collector/processor of the information, e.g., NSA, rather than the all-source I&W analyst. The analyst enters the picture when the input arrives at the model indicating that the node to which it is associated is either normal, active or of concern. The analyst may then accept or reject that input based upon his experience and the context of the situation at hand.

One output of this model, the "temperature reading," if you will, should assist a warning analyst in charting trends in Warsaw Pact attack readiness, determining the reason for significant changes, and rendering a more reasoned and substantiated warning judgment to a decisionmaker.

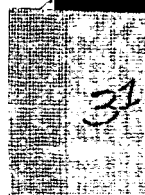
Another output should be noted. The collector/processors are required to submit not only a numerical assessment of a target's activity level but a measure of their confidence in the information. The model then degrades that confidence over time in order to generate a statement of uncertainty and accompanying need for additional or updated information.

The third task has been equally difficult but not ignored. Collections personnel have developed a theoretical concept for designing collection strategies. These strategies will provide a framework for an improved statement of indications and warning collection requirements and for improved multisource collection operations. Such strategies must be consistent with Warsaw Pact readiness doctrine and keyed to the analytic perception of the warning situation. They must cover a broad spectrum of attack options and provide target priority emphasis keyed to attack preparation phases.

The normal collection posture is to operate collection resources against those targets most likely to produce indications of force posture changes. In Project WISP models are being developed which would assist in identifying those targets which would aid in detecting the next events in the mobilization process.

Project WISP's activities entered another phase in November 1978. During that month a series of tests began which were designed to provide evidence that the WISP concept can be implemented in the real world. The analytical model is being tested, first with historical data and later with live, on-line information. Procedures will be developed to maintain the currency of the target data base. Special efforts will be made to apply collection sampling techniques on a multisource basis. The conclusion of this phase will provide a basis for recommendations on the full implementation of the WISP concept.

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MEMBERS, SWS OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

<u>NAME</u>		<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 200px; height: 80px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">[Redacted]</div>	Chairman	DIA
		NSA
		DCI
		DCI
Mr. Richard Kerr		DCI
Mr. Dean Howells		State

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